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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MID Mediation Program Nears 4,000 Case Mark

Jackson –Commissioner of Insurance George Dale announced today, on the one year anniversary of the date mediation conferences of the state run Hurricane Katrina Mediation Program began, there have been nearly 4,000 requests for mediations through the program. He added that the offices of the Mississippi Insurance Department (MID) continue to receive calls each week from individuals wishing to participate.

Of the 3,827 mediation requests filed thru February 9, 2007, over 2,600 have reached settlement with only 551 impasses. The program’s success rate remains a strong 83%. In addition, over 100 cases of individuals who had filed lawsuits and who were ordered into a federal court mediation program by Judge L. T. Senter, is seeing a 53% success rate.

“I continue to be very pleased with the results we are seeing. I think this program is one of the untold success stories of the hurricane recovery process. Homeowners, who are frustrated, can go through mediation and walk out of the conference with a settlement check and begin the rebuilding process right away,” Dale said.

Mediation is a confidential process between a policyholder and an insurance company and therefore exact settlement rates cannot be discussed, however, Dale added that he often hears from people who have participated in the process and come away extremely satisfied.

If the parties reach a settlement at the mediation conference, the policyholder has three business days to rescind the settlement agreement as long as they have not cashed any check issued by the insurance company as a result of the settlement. After three business days, if the policyholder has not rescinded, the settlement will become final.

Commissioner Dale also stressed that while mediation may not work for all outstanding cases, it is still a quick and viable alternative to costly and lengthy litigation, reminding consumers that all the costs of the mediation are borne by the insurer; there is no cost to the policyholder. He continues to strongly encourage participation in the MID Hurricane Katrina Mediation program.

In addition, the MID is exploring ways to include other types of insurance than homeowners into the program.

A policyholder may request a mediation conference in one of four ways:

- By writing the Administrator at:
American Arbitration Association
Attn: MS Insurance Mediation
13455 Noel Road, Suite 1750
Dallas, Texas 75240
- By calling the Administrator at: 1-800-426-8792
- By faxing a request to the Administrator at 972-702-0173
- By contacting the Administrator on-line at MSinsmediation@adr.org.

For more information on the Mississippi Mediation Program visit the MID website at www.doi.state.ms.us

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